

IN THE EXECUTIVE ETHICS COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

In re: COREY WELLS

) OEIG Case # 11-01130

OEIG FINAL REPORT (REDACTED)

Below is a final summary report from an Executive Inspector General. The General Assembly has directed the Commission to redact information from this report that may reveal the identity of witnesses, complainants or informants and “any other information it believes should not be made public.” 5 ILCS 430/20-52(b).

The Commission exercises this responsibility with great caution and with the goal of balancing the sometimes competing interests of increasing transparency and operating with fairness to the accused. In order to balance these interests, the Commission may redact certain information contained in this report. The redactions are made with the understanding that the subject or subjects of the investigation have had no opportunity to rebut the report’s factual allegations or legal conclusions before the Commission.

The Executive Ethics Commission (“Commission”) received a final report from the Governor’s Office of Executive Inspector General (“OEIG”) and a response from the agency in this matter. The Commission redacted the final report and mailed copies of the redacted version and responses to the Attorney General, the Governor’s Executive Inspector General and to Corey Wells at his last known address.

These recipients were given fifteen days to offer suggestions for redaction or provide a response to be made public with the report. The Commission, having reviewed all suggestions received, makes this document available pursuant to 5 ILCS 430/20-52.

**FINAL REPORT**

**I. Allegations and Background**

The Office of Executive Inspector General (“OEIG”) initiated an investigation of Illinois Department of Transportation (“IDOT”) employee Corey Wells after initially determining that his State issued laptop may contain inappropriate [redacted] files. Mr. Wells is an Engineering Technician for IDOT District 7 in Effingham, Illinois.

**II. Investigation**

**A. OEIG Self-Initiated Filename Search**

OEIG investigators conducted a search of the State of Illinois Microsoft Systems Management Server for computers that may contain inappropriate files. The search revealed that

the laptop computer identified as State computer number D7LADML11642 assigned to IDOT District 7 Engineering Technician Corey Wells may contain inappropriate files.

## **B. OEIG Review of State Computer Hard Drive and Other Electronic Data**

On August 24, 2011, OEIG investigators seized State computer number D7LADML11642 from IDOT employee Corey Wells. The OEIG imaged the hard drive of this computer using computer forensic software. Forensic analysis of the image of the hard drive revealed the following content [of a sexually explicit nature]:

- [redacted]
- [redacted]<sup>1</sup>; and,
- [redacted]

Investigators also found temporary internet files indicating the laptop was used to visit pornographic internet sites, such as one with a header, [redacted].

OEIG investigators also obtained and reviewed a copy of the data in Corey Wells' email account archive from Central Management Services. Mr. Wells' email account archive did not contain material with sexually explicit content.

## **C. Interview of Subject Corey Wells**

On October 17, 2011, OEIG investigators interviewed Corey Wells. Mr. Wells has been an IDOT employee since 1998 and is supervised by [redacted]. During the interview, Mr. Wells confirmed that he was assigned an IDOT laptop computer.

Mr. Wells was then asked questions regarding his use of the computer and was specifically asked if he viewed inappropriate material on his laptop computer. In response, Mr. Wells denied viewing inappropriate material on his State-issued laptop. Investigators then presented Mr. Wells with copies of inappropriate images that had been found on his computer. Mr. Wells initially stated that he recognized four of the images as pictures sent to him by an acquaintance, but was unable to recognize the other 72 images. Mr. Wells said that he did not know how the four images he recognized were saved to the laptop, but explained that they might have accidentally been transferred with other files from a USB device.

Investigators then presented Mr. Wells with "screen shots" from two inappropriate web pages found and referenced in the laptop's temporary internet files. Mr. Wells stated that he did not remember specifically visiting the web pages but confirmed that he may have visited an inappropriate site, changed his mind, and closed the web page immediately. Mr. Wells said he did not remember if he viewed any sexually explicit videos on the laptop and could not recall downloading inappropriate audio files. Mr. Wells said that the video could have been a pop-up advertisement from a time when he visited an inappropriate website but then changed his mind

---

<sup>1</sup> [Redacted]

about viewing the website. He further stated that he never downloaded the audio files, but that he may have “played them” on his laptop.

Mr. Wells was then asked to clarify his statement about “viewing and listening” to these files. In response, Mr. Wells then confirmed and acknowledged that he accessed all of the inappropriate images, video clip, audio files, and websites found on the hard drive of his State-issued laptop. Mr. Wells said he viewed the inappropriate material at his home on his scheduled day off, not at his IDOT office. Mr. Wells then stated that the last time he accessed the material was sometime in January 2011.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wells said he came across the images, video, audio files and websites by conducting an internet search for a sexually explicit website.

### **III. Analysis**

#### **A. Corey Wells Violated IDOT Information Technology Policies**

The IDOT Information Technology Resources Usage Code (“Code”), found in Departmental Order 8-2, Section 4.E.1, states in pertinent part, “[i]nternet use is monitored and tracked. Viewing web sites with inappropriate content is strictly prohibited.” Section 4.G.1 of the Code defines “Inappropriate or Unlawful Material” as:

Material that is fraudulent, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, defamatory; or that is intended to harass, embarrass or intimidate; or that is unlawful or otherwise determined by the department to be inappropriate shall not be sent by e-mail or other form of electronic communication (such as bulletin board systems, newsgroups, chat groups, etc.) or displayed on or stored in department IT resources.

Corey Wells violated IDOT’s Information Technology Resources Usage Code by viewing inappropriate images, a video clip, audio files, and websites on his State laptop. The material viewed by Mr. Wells is sexually explicit and meets the Code’s definition of “Inappropriate or Unlawful Material.” Accordingly, the allegation that Corey Wells violated IDOT policy by improperly using his State computer is **FOUNDED**.

### **IV. Recommendations**

Following due investigation, the OEIG issues these findings:

➤ **FOUNDED** – Corey Wells misused his State laptop computer by accessing inappropriate images, video, audio, and websites on his State laptop.

The OEIG recommends that IDOT discipline Corey Wells for the misuse of his State laptop computer.

No further investigative action is warranted, and this case is considered closed.

---

<sup>2</sup> Forensic analysis revealed that the material was actually last accessed on February 18, 2011.



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Quality Compliance & Review  
201 West Center Court / Schaumburg, Illinois 60196-1096

January 24, 2012

Mr. Neil P. Olson  
Deputy Inspector General  
Office of Executive Inspector General  
for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor  
607 E. Adams, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Subject: OEIG Complaint # 11-01130

Dear Mr. Olson:

This letter is in response to your December 29, 2011 letter regarding case number 11-01130 in which you requested that we report to your office the actions taken to address your recommendations. A pre-disciplinary hearing is scheduled on January 31, 2012, at which Mr. Wells will be provided a Statement of Charges. It is anticipated that he will be charged with a Violation of IDOT Information Technology Order and Misuse of State Property. We will provide your office further information after the completion of the discipline process.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact me at

Respectfully,

Jeffery L. Heck  
Acting Director



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Quality Compliance & Review  
201 West Center Court / Schaumburg, Illinois 60196-1096

February 22, 2012

Mr. Neil P. Olson  
Deputy Inspector General  
Office of Executive Inspector General  
for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor  
607 E. Adams, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Subject: OEIG Complaint # 11-01130

Dear Mr. Olson:

This letter is in response to your December 29, 2011 letter regarding case number 11-01130 in which you requested that we report to your office the actions taken to address your recommendations. As a result of your investigation and recommendation Mr. Wells will be discharged effective February 23, 2012.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact me at .

Respectfully,

Jeffery L. Heck  
Director



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Quality Compliance & Review  
201 West Center Court / Schaumburg, Illinois 60196-1096

August 24, 2012

Mr. Neil P. Olson  
Deputy Inspector General  
Office of Executive Inspector General  
for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor  
607 E. Adams, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Subject: OEIG Complaint # 11-01130

Dear Mr. Olson:

This letter is in response to your December 29, 2011 letter regarding case number 11-01130 in which you requested that we report to your office the actions taken to address your recommendations. As stated in our February 22, 2012 letter, as a result of your investigation and recommendations Mr. Wells was discharged from employment. It is my understanding that there are no pending grievances associated with the Department's actions.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance to you or your staff, please do not hesitate to contact me at . . .

Respectfully,

Jeffery L. Heck  
Director



RECEIVED  
AUG 30 2012

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
FOR THE AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

607 EAST ADAMS, 14<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1634  
(217) 558-5600

**CONFIDENTIAL**

*Via Electronic and U.S. Mail*

August 29, 2012

Chad Fornoff, Executive Director  
Executive Ethics Commission  
401 South Spring Street  
513 William Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

**Re: OEIG Case No. 11-01130**

Dear Executive Director Fornoff:

On February 23, 2012, we transmitted to the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) our Final Report and agency response in the above-referenced case. As we noted in that letter, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) was seeking to discharge the subject, Corey Wells, and we anticipated he would grieve that discharge. Indeed, as predicted, Mr. Wells did file a grievance. However, as explained in the attached August 24, 2012 letter from IDOT, there are now no longer any pending grievances regarding Mr. Wells, and he has been terminated.

In light of Mr. Wells's termination, we believe this Final Report and agency response are required to be published by the EEC. Despite this requirement, we wish to reiterate our February 23, 2012 suggestion in which we ask that Mr. Wells's name and identifying information be redacted from the published report. We respectfully offer this redaction suggestion because even though we believe increased transparency is important, the public disclosure we believe is necessary in this case is that this sort of misconduct (viewing sexually explicit material on State-issued computers) is inappropriate. In this instance, public disclosure of the misconduct is more important than the public disclosure of the identity of the subject who engaged in the misconduct, but is no longer a State employee. If the EEC opts not to accept our suggestions for redaction, we respectfully request it to publish this letter as our agency's Section 20-52(b) response. That section requires the EEC to permit our office the opportunity to "offer suggestions for redaction [which we have] or provide a response that shall be made public with the summary report."

Should you have questions or require further information, please contact me at 217-558-0900.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Meza  
Executive Inspector General  
for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor

By:  
Neil P. Olson  
Deputy Inspector General

cc: Cole Kain & File  
Brent Stratton, Office of the Illinois Attorney General  
Encl: IDOT letter dated August 24, 2012



RECEIVED  
SEP 25 2012

EXECUTIVE  
ETHICS COMMISSION

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
FOR THE AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

32 WEST RANDOLPH STREET, SUITE 1900  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601  
(312) 814-5600

CONFIDENTIAL

September 20, 2012

*Via Electronic & U.S. Mail*

Chad Fornoff  
Executive Director  
Executive Ethics Commission  
401 S. Spring Street  
513 William Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

**Re: Release of Redacted Report: OEIG Case No. 11-01130**

Dear Executive Director Fornoff:

Pursuant to your letter dated September 7, 2012, our Office has reviewed the Executive Ethics Commission's (EEC) proposed redactions to the Final Report issued in the above-referenced matter. First, we thank the EEC for agreeing to publish our August 29, 2012 letter, in which we suggested that Mr. Wells's name and identifying information be redacted.

Second, we would like to take this opportunity to again respectfully reiterate our suggestion that Mr. Wells's name and identifying information be redacted from the Final Report and attachments. As we noted in our August 29 letter, in this instance we think it is more important to disclose the type of misconduct discovered and investigated by our Office rather than the subject's name, particularly in view of the fact that Mr. Wells is now no longer a State employee.

If the EEC does not accept our redaction recommendations, we request the EEC make this letter public pursuant to Section 20-52 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

Thank you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Meza  
Executive Inspector General

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cole S. Kain  
Chief of Staff and General Counsel

cc: Brent Stratton, Office of the Illinois Attorney General (via electronic mail)